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MAR 29 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners

Save the Bitterroot Conservation Coalition (S.B.C.C.)

Chris A. Linkenhoker, Treasurer
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Glenda,
 Please record
 this & make it
 available to the
 Commissioners.
 Thanks,
 Chris

County Commissioners, Ravalli County

Re Air Pollution and Land Development in Hamilton and Ravalli County

Dear Commissioners,

March 28, 2007

Save the Bitterroot Conservation Coalition has been closely following the issue of air pollution in the Hamilton area ever since the DEQ announced the concerns on KPAX News in Missoula on January 19 of this year. We have in fact, contacted Mr. Jeffrey's in the state DEQ office and he has graciously provided us with research sites from the EPA regarding health and mortality effects from this on-going air pollution and the research results are compelling – the citizens of the Bitterroot Valley, and in particular, Hamilton, have been suffering serious health effects from air pollution for many years and this is a direct result of unmitigated, over-development of the valley.

Attached are excerpts from important EPA research documents that discuss health effects, including increased mortality, from the very types of air pollution that we are currently subjected to in this valley.

Attachment 1 is entitled "Health and Environment" and it states: "Particle pollution - especially fine particles - contains microscopic solids or liquid droplets that are so small that they can get deep into the lungs and cause serious health problems. Numerous scientific studies have linked particle pollution exposure to a variety of problems, including:

- increased respiratory symptoms, such as irritation of the airways, coughing, or difficulty breathing, for example;
- decreased lung function;
- aggravated asthma;
- development of chronic bronchitis;
- irregular heartbeat;
- nonfatal heart attacks; and
- premature death in people with heart or lung disease.

Attachment 2 is entitled "Provisional Assessment of Recent Studies on Health Effects of Particulate Matter Exposure". The 3 included tables list the very real health effects from air pollution and the following statistics are worth noting"

Increased Cardiopulmonary Mortality in Adults =1.18, or an 18%

Increased Lung Cancer Mortality in Adults=1.18 or 18%

Increased Bronchitis in Children=1.3 or 30%

As a result of our research, we notified Mayor Randazzo and the Hamilton City Council in a written letter on February 6, compelling that governing body to take steps to alert their citizens about what is clearly a serious health issue and we have received no response. We do not believe that they are taking this issue seriously and they continue to move forward with developments, including the contentious Flat Iron Ranch annexation proposal, instead of protecting their own citizens from this serious health issue. We are hopeful that the Commissioners will move to take this issue seriously and take the necessary steps to protect the citizens of the Bitterroot Valley.

For the record, SBCC believes that it is imperative that the Commissioners move forward aggressively to deal with this very serious, public health issue, including placing a moratorium on approval of all major developments including the Area III Subdivision, Flat Iron Ranch Subdivision, Wal Mart, Legacy Ranch. At a very minimum, serious constraints on all land disturbing activities should be put in place immediately.

The DEQ report is compelling and thorough, and can (may) be used as the basis for requesting a Court Injunction to stop all development activities until a mitigation and recovery plan has been established and is fully enforced. We would obviously prefer that this governing body, as well as the Hamilton City Council, take assertive action to protect the the health and welfare of it's citizens as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris A. Linkenhoker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris A. Linkenhoker